

arts & entertainment



The WetSpots' Cass King and John Woods pen risqué (but never foul) songs about sex and sexuality that are turning a few heads.

Ribald lyrics set sex-loving WetSpots apart

By Shawn Conner

CASS KING'S DAY JOB ENSURES SEX IS never far from her mind. Working the counter of Womyn's Ware, a retail outlet specializing in dildos, vibrators and lubricants, the former sex columnist is privy to people's buying habits, as well as the myriad stimulants and paraphernalia available to the discerning adult. "I want to write a song about lubes," says King. "There are so many things to know about them."

King, a respected spoken word performer, now has the outlet. The WetSpots, her duo with partner John Woods, has been performing since July. Setting ribald (but never foul) come-ons to jazzy, upbeat music at odds with the lascivious lyrics, the act is carving out its own niche in the local arts scene. So far the WetSpots has performed at Lafflines Comedy Club, Café Montmartre and in Watermelon's *The Grow Show*.

"The basic inspiration for the WetSpots came when we realized we have a unique perspective on sex and sexuality," says King, who's wearing a flapperish Betsey Johnson original and knee-high fishnets with silk flowers in her hair. "We're very open-minded and we're in a very open-minded community. And we were thinking about those

old R&B and jazz songs like 'Shave 'Em Dry' and 'The Hucklebuck' that used to be so risqué and aren't anymore. We wanted to write songs that might be daring for right now in the hopes that in 20 to 30 years people will look back at our songs and say 'Hey, those were really risqué for their time.'"

"At the same time, we want to write pleasant, safe, easy listening kind of music but with these outrageous lyrics," says Woods, who's decked out in a paisley smoking jacket, sock garters and ascot.

As an example, the singer/guitarist cites "Do You Take It," a tune about an activity still illegal in a few southern states. "With that song we wanted something that sounded like what two romantic leads in a Disney musical would sing."

"It's the classic 'there's a place for us,' 'someday my prince will come' ingénue type of song," says King. Except, of course, that the whole future of the leads' relationship hinges on one, er, area of compatibility.

The WetSpots' cheerful predilection for airing their lacy lingerie is in service to promoting a healthy attitude towards sex. "A lot of sexual humour comes from people being afraid or uneasy," says Woods. "They make fun of things they don't know about, like 'haha, isn't this person funny because he

likes to dress in women's clothes.' We're more like, 'Hey, this was our weekend, check it out.'"

The two ambassadors of kink ("We're your kinky neighbours" is the proud refrain of one song) currently have a repertoire of three originals, with four more "in their third trimester." Their next gig is a fundraiser for the Vancouver International Comedy Festival Nov. 11 at Richard's on Richards, followed by appearances at Lafflines in New West Nov. 14 and 15. Plans also include a CD with producer Steven Drake (54-40, the Odds).

"The WetSpots has really started to take off," says Woods. "The shows keep landing on our laps. But we've been doing our own thing a long time before this."

Woods is a guitarist with pop band the Orchid Highway and a singer/songwriter in Johnny Wisdom and the Hi-Risk Group while King, who wrote the Organ Grinder sex column for *Terminal City*, is working on a CD-Rom of her poetry and flash animation. "We thought of the WetSpots the way kids might make up dirty songs in the schoolyard, as something fun," says Woods. "Then we'd go back to school and do our serious stuff. All of a sudden what's going on in the playground is getting all the attention."